

Testimony in support of bill RBH 5306

AN ACT CONCERNING THE OPERATION OF CHILD DAY CARE CENTERS AND GROUP DAY CARE HOMES IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

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Members of the committee, my name is Sharon Tripp and I am from East Windsor. I support bill #5306.

My non-profit organization Organized Parents Make A Difference offers after school enrichment programs in 4 of the Hartford public schools. We serve 400 students each day. The students come to us at 2:30 and most go home at 6:00. While they are in our program they are involved in literacy based enrichment activities.

I was a camp director for many years before coming to Hartford to run this agency. I stood here in front of this committee many times in support of camp licensing. I know the importance of oversight in this manner. My concern is the regulations as they are presently written make little sense. Currently the regulations are written to include strict language concerning the facility in which the program is held. If we were to apply for a license we would surely be denied due to the fact that we run our programs in a public school building. The requirements are not appropriate for programs that take place at school sites. I see little logic in the fact that the school is deemed to be safe until 2:30 then something metaphysical happens to the building and it is no longer safe for the rest of the afternoon! Currently my organization is being supported by my school system allowing it to be exempt from the licensing because of the school buildings, although this may be temporary.

Keeping the regulations the way they are presently written will also negatively effect all other community based organizations, leaving many more inner-city children without services. If we are forced to comply with the present regulations we may need to close our doors leaving 30 employees out of work, hundreds of parents scrambling to find after school support and many employers forced to address absenteeism in their workforce.

Please consider the changes that are being suggested by a very dedicated group of afterschool providers exempting the physical plant licensing requirements for afterschool and childcare programs in public schools.